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ISLAMIC FOCUS

ISLAMIC PARADIGM OF GREED



11 LESSONS
FROM SURAH

QASAS

MUSIC

THE SATANIC WEAPON

Ahlan Wasahlan...

FROM THE EDITOR

Among the weapons given to the devil to mislead man is the power of his voice. He has the ability to distract through the use of music. Our nation of Islam is the venue for the final showdown between man and the devil. As a result, the devil has been allowed an unprecedented opening up of a level of power which he never previously enjoyed. Hardly a soul can escape the strike of music upon his ears. In our article we explore music in contrast to the Noble Quran, the proofs for its prohibition, and how western music crept into the Muslim world together with its culture of immorality. The article ends with a remedy to the problem of music.

Angels are the pure creation of Allah ﷻ, who are dedicated to fulfilling any task that Allah ﷻ orders them with. Allah ﷻ instructs them to make Dua for those among mankind who are engaged in good. Our article looks at some deeds that gain us the Dua of the Angels.

One of the inbuilt qualities in man is greed. If it is left unchecked,

it becomes the root of all things destructive in this world and within ourselves. Exploitation, wars, strife and disputes are just some of the consequences of uncontrolled greed. People's rights are trampled and even the cause of immorality is the greed for pleasure. We present the Islamic philosophy on greed and show how the capitalist system actively exploits greed to prosper. The article suggests ways to keep greed in check.

Surah Qasas provides us with life lessons concerning power, tough times and spotting and nurturing talent and skills among many others. Become acquainted with 11 of these lessons in our succinct article on the topic.

These articles are meant to provide an insight into topics that are of current relevance to our lives.

Email your thoughts to us:
info@islamicfocus.co.za

Muhammad Badsha
(Moulana)

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CONTENTS

4 MUSIC THE SATANIC WEAPON

10 DUAS OF ANGELS

11 ISLAMIC PARADIGM OF GREED

16 11 LESSONS FROM SURAH QASAS



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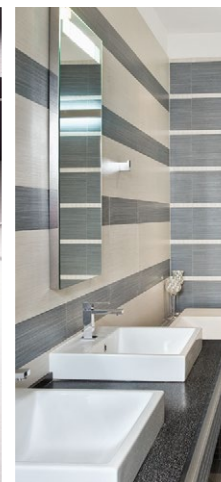
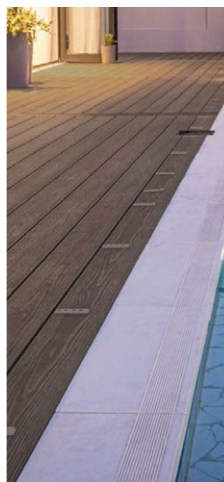
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MUSIC

THE SATANIC WEAPON

- *We have become conditioned to think that music is normal and acceptable. This is something recent. The Muslim society's original term for a male professional singer was mukhannath (an effeminate man who behaved like women).*

One of the most important aspects of Ramadaan is connecting with the Noble Quran and especially reciting it.

THE NOBLE QURAN IS OUR LIFELINE TO SUCCESS:

1. "Be firmly connected to the Quran. Take it as your leader and guide because it is the words of the Lord of the worlds. It came from Him and will return to Him." (Al Jaami al Kabeer)

2. "The Quran is more beloved to Allah ﷻ than the heavens and the earth and all that they contain." (Daarimi)

3. The Prophet ﷺ warned that a severe trial will take place. Ali ؓ asked him what the means of saving oneself from its evil would be. In reply he said, "The Book of Allah ﷻ." (Tirmidhi)

Gaza is a clear proof of how the Noble Quran protects. The Hifz tradition was strong in Gaza before the 2023 genocide. After a year of brutal massacres and ethnic cleansing, why is the faith of the people still so strong? Why are they still so committed to defending their land? It is most likely

the blessings and link that they have with the Noble Quran that is keeping them motivated.

4. We should make it a practice to recite the Noble Quran regularly in our homes. The Hadith promises that the house in which the Noble Quran is recited will see the members of the home increase, blessings will multiply, the Angels will come, and the devil runs away. On the other hand, life will become difficult for the house in which the Noble Quran is not recited, it becomes empty of blessings, the Angels leave, and the devil comes. (Ibn Abi Shaibah)

There used to be a tradition among the older people that they would recite the Noble Quran loud in the homes daily. We need to revive and uphold that tradition. Zubair ibn Bakkar says that his father saw him studying a book silently and told him, "Study loudly. Look in the book and raise your voice. In this way what the eye will see will reach the heart, and together with that what the ear hears will also reach the heart." (Khateeb Baghdadi)

It takes 10,000 focused hours to excel in any field of this world according to studies. How much time are we dedicating to excel in the Noble Quran?

MUSIC AND THE NOBLE QURAN IN ONE HEART

In reciting the Noble Quran, a common complaint is that there is no time in the day. Let us be honest. When our time is taken up with browsing social media feeds, the internet and video content like YouTube, how can we expect to have that time for the Noble Quran?

The second thing that takes up the time and space in our hearts and minds that should have been dedicated to the Noble Quran is music. Ibn al Qayyim rahimahullah says, "Love for music and love for the Noble Quran cannot exist together in the same heart. One displaces the other." (Madaarij al Saalikeen)

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF PEOPLE WHO ARE ADDICTED TO MUSIC:

1. One who openly engages in it and misses out on worship of Allah swt.

2. The other does acts of worship but the love for music is more in his heart than love for the Noble Quran. His mind is filled with the tunes and lyrics of songs and music.

Imam Ghazali rahimahullah sounds a stern warning and says, "The first sign of Allah swt turning His Mercy away from a person is when the person busies himself with useless things that have no benefit for him." One such thing which falls under this category of things without purpose is music.

Abdur Rauf Sakhravi observes that music is all around us. As a result, regarding music to be a

sin has left our hearts. We tend to find nothing wrong with it. Ibn al Jawzi rahimahullah in Talbis Iblis writes that singing and music have two worrying elements:

1. It distracts the heart from the Greatness of Allah swt and worshipping Him, and

2. It inclines the heart to seeking quick pleasures that seek their fulfilment in all the sensory desires. Singing is the charm that takes a person towards adultery.

It is thus no surprise that music through history has been linked to immorality and vice.

MUSIC BEING HARAAM (FORBIDDEN) IS PROVEN FROM THE NOBLE QURAN AND HADITH:

1. "There is a man among the people who buys discourses of distracting amusements, so that he may mislead (people) from the Way of Allah and make a mockery of it." (Noble Quran 31:6) Ibn Masud rahimahullah, referring to these discourses, said on oath that it refers to music. Ibn Abbas rahimahullah concurs with this together with Hasan al Basri rahimahullah and others.

Qatada rahimahullah said that a person might not actually spend money on acquiring music, but buying here means that he likes it. Free downloading of music tracks and videos fits aptly under this explanation.

2. There was a person by the name of Nadr ibn Haarith who attempted to counteract the draw and appeal of the Noble Quran as recited by the Prophet swt by

bringing into Makkah Mukarramah the stories of Rustum and others from Persia. He would have these recited to the public. He also had a singing girl. Anyone who showed an interest in listening to the Noble Quran, he would invite him home, feed him well, and get the singing girl to sing. Then he would ask if this was not better entertainment than the Noble Quran.

3. The Hadith of Abu Dawood and other collections outline the task of Prophethood to include destroying flutes, drums and other musical instruments.

People of the Ummah of Islam will be transformed into monkeys and pigs close to Qiyamah

4. A Hadith prophecies that people of the Ummah (nation) of Islam will be transformed into monkeys and pigs close to Qiyamah (the last day). They will fast and be Muslim but due to becoming accustomed and addicted to musical instruments, singing girls and drinking wine they will face this punishment. (Ibn Hibban)

5. A Hadith of Ibn Majah warns of people being swallowed into the earth, appearances and forms being changed, and the raining of stones when singing girls become common and wine is regarded as permissible.

6. The Hadith of Tabrani states that the income of a singing girl and her singing are both prohibited. The narration in Kanz al Ummal counts the income of the male and female singer as prohibited as is the income of prostitutes. In Mujam al Kabeer listening to and looking at singing girls is declared prohibited.

7. Nayl al Athar lists sitting in gatherings of music as disobedience, listening to it as a sin and taking enjoyment from it as being ungrateful.

THE DEVIL'S WEAPON

Among the weapons given to the devil to mislead and trap man is the power of his voice. "Use your voice to gradually entice whoever you can." (Noble Quran 17:64) This is a feature of music that it gradually draws you in, breaking down the barriers and inhibitions. The devil has the ability to distract, tempt and trap man through the use of music and musical instruments by putting thoughts into the hearts and minds of man. Our nation of Islam is the venue for the final showdown and battle between man and the devil. As a result, the devil has been allowed an unprecedented opening up of a level of power which he never previously enjoyed. His voice reaches everywhere. Hardly a soul can escape the strike of music upon his ears through the TV, cartoons, music and more. Listening to music is not merely hearing it but being captivated by the tunes and messages.

To appreciate the stunning impact of music one need only look at the revenues earned and generated. Total global music revenue for 2024 is \$65 billion, a rise of 10% from the previous year or a third of bread revenue. Paid

streaming subscriptions are \$14 billion. Record companies invest

in the 19th and 20th centuries. The gramophone, originally

Studies show that music activates every known part of the brain, including areas responsible for emotions

\$7 billion annually in marketing alone. The smartphone we have in our pockets is a gateway to \$10 billion revenue to the music market via apps. In 2022, 8,01 billion music tracks were downloaded. Sub-Saharan Africa is struggling financially with people unable to get jobs, yet the region is the fastest growing market for music downloads. It has seen a 25% rise in sales with South Africa taking the biggest share.

There's a reason that so much money is spent on producing music – it has a definite effect on the heart and mind. A Hadith of Baihaqi tells us that music grows hypocrisy in the heart just as water causes crops to grow. Studies show that music activates every known part of the brain, including areas responsible for emotions. Experiencing music releases dopamine, the chemical in the brain responsible for pleasure and reward. Music can be used to affect, alter and change moods. Modern music uses that to great effect in being provocative and stirring base sexual feelings.

HOW DID WESTERN MUSIC COME INTO THE MUSLIM WORLD?

Colonialism brought new technology including media in its wake. Europeans started making celebrities of musicians

called the phonograph, came followed by the radio and film. In the 1960's the radio increased its spread due to the transistor. Then the TV, PC, internet and the mobile phone came in quick succession.

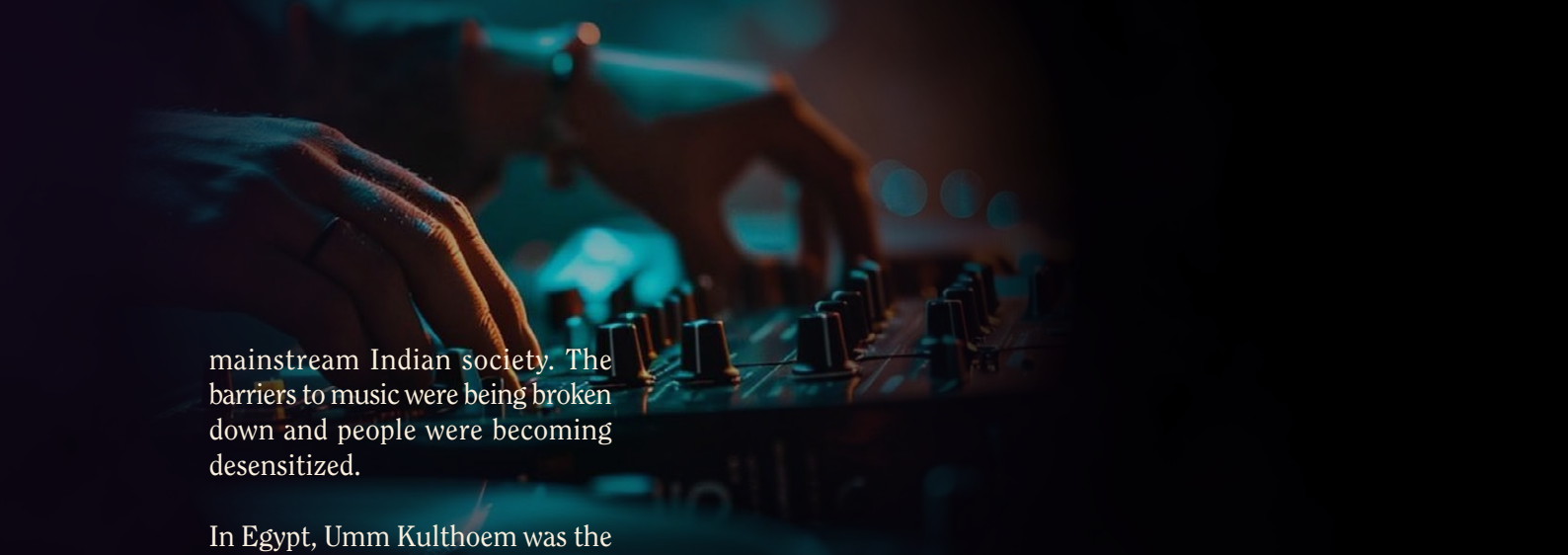
1. The gramophone made its commercial debut in 1897 and spread to India under British rule in 1902.

2. A visitor to Syria in the 1930's noted that the phonograph, radio and films were exerting their influence. The phonograph was so popular and commonplace that lemonade sellers in Syria carried them around going full blast as they sold their wares.

3. Tea shops in Tehran provided the phonograph to keep their trade.

4. Lahore had six picture houses in the 1930's. In five years, it increased to 20 and the cinema proliferated.

In India, Angelina Yeoward, an Armenian Jew, called herself Guhar Jaan. She was a prostitute who lived in Calcutta's red-light district. She became the first commercial recording artist in India. From being someone who people were embarrassed to listen to, she was transformed through technology and a concerted British advertising campaign into



mainstream Indian society. The barriers to music were being broken down and people were becoming desensitized.

In Egypt, Umm Kulthoom was the singer who launched music into mainstream Arab society. European indoctrination laid the platform for an ideology change. This can be gauged by the fact that in 1897 Egypt there were a staggering 9,000 students at British missionary schools, while the prestigious Azhar Islamic university could only draw 11,000. Radio came to Egypt in 1934. Umm Kulthoom would have five-hour concerts on the radio bringing traffic to a standstill around the Arab world. She started off as a reciter of Nasheeds and religious poems, wearing a veil. At 19 she was singing songs with immoral words to mixed audiences with no veil and from there it all went downhill.

We have become conditioned to think that music is normal and acceptable. This is something recent. The term artist being used for a musician is recent usage. The Muslim society's original term for a male professional singer was mukhannath (an effeminate man who behaved like women). The professional female singer was also held in contempt. Colonialism and the music revolution it brought in its wake changed perceptions and norms.

THE CULTURE OF MODERN MUSIC IS ONE OF IMMORALITY AND EVIL

In 1969 in Woodstock, New York, USA half a million people under the age of 30 gathered for a music festival. They listened to music, experimented with drugs and abandoned societal norms by engaging in sex and nakedness in public. This is an indication of the association that modern music has with other major sins. The music industry sees singers facing abuse, and perpetrating abuse. Many turn to drugs and alcohol like Whitney Houston, Bobby Brown, Natalie Cole, Michael Jackson, Elton John, John Lennon, Britney Spears and the list goes on.

We need to objectively ask the question, "is music harmful?" A quick search of the music the majority are listening to, the songs topping the charts, and the lyrics being memorised will reveal the words to be pure filth. Drugs, promiscuity, violence and alcohol feature strongly. They teach us to follow our low animal desires, objectifying women and glorifying violence and drugs. They call to worship the material pleasures of this world.

A survey of lyrics from the 1950's to the 2010's looked at the key

words in songs. Explicit words associated with shamelessness and sex rose 9%. Explicit lyrics have increased as the barriers are broken, and tolerance increases. The 1950's had four swear words in songs with one of them being the word, Hell. By the 1990's songs with swear words accounted for 20% of all songs and this continues to rise. Popular culture is dominated by sexually suggestive music videos both visually and with the words. Deviant sexual behaviour is glorified, and women are displayed provocatively. Music draws people in and makes them want more until it becomes an addiction.

Why are we so caught up with music if we know the sins involved? Ibn al Jawzi رحمہ اللہ states that Allah ﷻ is close to us, yet He defines the relation between Him and man like a person deals with someone far away. We need to travel to Makkah Mukarramah to perform Hajj, and we raise our hands in Dua as though asking from someone far away. An ignorant person senses the distance and falls into sin thinking that he is out of the Sight of Allah ﷻ.

WHAT IS THE REMEDY?

Remember there is always hope amidst the worst onslaught of sin. A Hadith of Ibn Majah reassures us that, “Allah ﷻ will continue to plant shrubs in Islam by creating men of piety who shall remain firm in their obedience to Allah ﷻ.”

1. As parents we need to adopt the correct nurturing of the mindset of our kids from the outset. Moulana Yunus Patel ﷺ said that if a child desires a Haraam toy such as a musical instrument, explain to the child gently that Allah ﷻ is not Pleased with it. Thereafter buy something better of a permissible nature within your means so that the child does not feel as if he is deprived of play. Make the child happy with Halaal so that they will grow up loving Islam.

This is even more critical with the habit parents have of allowing the phone to babysit their young ones with video streaming.

2. Addressing the youth, Moulana

Yunus Patel ﷺ said, “You are in your youth. It is in your hands to safeguard yourself in your youth or destroy yourself. If you safeguard your youth by staying away from sins like music, Allah ﷻ will give you respect and dignity and you will enjoy a wholesome, happy life in your 20’s, 30’s and onwards.

3. We require rest but of the Halaal kind. Life is a tug of war between the pull of sins and the pull of Islam, the pull of the ego, desires and the devil and the pull of the soul.

4. Jalaluddin Rumi ﷺ gives the parable of a thorny tree. A man planted it in the road. People were getting hurt. When he was told to remove it, he said that he will remove it tomorrow but that tomorrow never came. The tree became stronger. Now when he needed to remove it after years, he was gone old and weak and the tree was rooted firmly. He needed a bulldozer to remove it at that time.

This is man. Sin in youth is easy to uproot like the young tree. As sins stay and you become addicted to them, the habit becomes more difficult to remove. When the vigour of youth goes, greater effort is required to remove the sin. The thorns of sins damage our Imaan (faith). The people of Allah ﷻ are like the bulldozers we then require to aid in removing sin. Even major, lifelong sins can be removed by joining their company and asking for their help.

We need to be ready for the challenges ahead in life by leaving out and avoiding the weapons of the devil such as music. We need to urgently connect with the Noble Quran in Ramadaan and beyond to ensure that we live meaningful and fulfilling lives in this world and the next. To do this we need to remove music from our lives so that we can get space in our hearts and time for the Noble Quran.

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DUAS OF THE ANGELS

Angels are the pure creation of Allah ﷻ, who are dedicated to fulfil any task that Allah ﷻ orders them with. Allah ﷻ instructs them to make Dua for those among mankind who are engaged in good.

These are some deeds that gain us the Dua of the Angels:

1. Teaching good to others

"Verily Allah ﷻ sends His special mercy; and His angels along with all of the inhabitants of the heavens and earths - to such an extent even the ant in its hole and the fish - all make Dua for the one who teaches the people good things." (Sunan Tirmidhi, 2685)

2. Making Dua for others

"Whenever a person (servant of Allah) makes Dua for his brother in his absence except that the angels make Dua saying: May you receive the same." (Sahih Muslim, 2733)

3. Visiting a sick Muslim

"When you visit a sick person or the deceased, ensure to say good things, as the Angels say Aameen to what you utter." (Sahih Muslim, 919)

4. Completing a recital

(khatm) of the entire Quran
"When a person completes the Quran in the evening, the angels seek forgiveness for this person till the morning, and

when he completes the Quran in the morning, the angels seek forgiveness for this person till the evening." (Sunan Darimi, 3483)

5. While waiting for Salaah

"A person will continuously receive the reward of being in Salaah as long as he remains in his place of prayer waiting for the Salaah and the angels will continue making Dua for forgiveness and mercy on his behalf until he leaves or he makes hadath. When Abu Hurairah ؓ asked the Prophet ﷺ what is meant by hadath he responded: "Passing wind." (Sahih Muslim, 1507)

6. Standing in the front saffs (rows) for Salaah

"Indeed Allah sends His special mercy and His angels seek forgiveness for those who pray in the first saff (row)." The Sahaba asked, "What about the second row?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Indeed Allah sends His special mercy and His angels seek forgiveness for those who pray in the first row." The Sahaba again asked: "What about the second row?" The Prophet ﷺ again replied, "Indeed Allah sends His special mercy and His angels seek forgiveness for those who pray in the first row." The Sahaba again asked, "What about the second row?" The Prophet ﷺ then

said, "And also for the second row." (Musnad Ahmad, 22263)

7. When someone eats in the presence of a fasting person

Ummu Umarah radhiallahu anha reports that the Prophet ﷺ visited her so she presented him some food. The Prophet ﷺ then told her to eat (as well with him) to which she replied, "I am fasting". Upon hearing this the Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily the angels make Dua for the one who is fasting as long as food is eaten in front of him." (Sunan Tirmidhi, 785)

8. Giving Charity

"Not a single day goes past when people wake up except that two angels descend; one of them (making Dua) saying: O Allah! Grant the one who spends (in avenues of good) a replacement/replenishment! Whilst the other one (curses) saying: O Allah! Send forth destruction for the one who hoards (excessively)." (Sahih Bukhari, 1442)

9. When Feeding Guests

"The Angels continue to make Dua for forgiveness for a person for as long as his tablecloth is placed open for (his guests)." (Musnad Is-haq ibn Rahuyah, 1025)

Adapted from: al-miftah.com

ISLAMIC PARADIGM OF GREED



The modern world is built on a culture of greed. People are encouraged to do whatever makes them happy, to chase their dreams, and not care about what anyone else says.

We are created beings, and no one knows us better than Allah ﷻ who created us. Only Divine Guidance from Him can solve our problems in the best way possible and guarantee us true happiness. Allah ﷻ knows our intricate make-up and has sent guidance to ensure that our lives function at their optimum and that we don't self-destruct.

One of the inbuilt qualities in man is greed. If it is left unchecked, it becomes what the Ulama of Tasawwuf and self-reformation define as the root of all things destructive in this world and within ourselves. Exploitation, wars, strife and disputes are just some of the consequences of uncontrolled greed. People's rights are trampled and even the cause of immorality is the greed for pleasure.

Greed is a sin that causes a person to disobey Allah ﷻ in pursuit of personal pleasure. Greed can significantly distort our relationship with money

leading to unhealthy attributes and behaviour, causing us to be irrational. Greed is an intense and selfish desire for wealth, power, food, influence, pleasure, privileges and in fact anything good. What makes it problematic is that it is a relentless pursuit of gain and influence at the expense of ethical considerations and the well-being of others. It is characterized by an excessive and insatiable appetite for more, regardless of the consequences.

The modern world is built on a culture of greed.

People are encouraged to do whatever makes them happy, to chase their dreams, and not care about what anyone else says. Religion, morality, and family are cast aside for the sake of personal pleasure. It creates a soulless, godless, narcissist, hyper individualistic society.

Milton Friedman speaks for the capitalistic ideology of greed when he says, "We need to destigmatize greed. There's nothing wrong with being greedy. Greed is good, greed is right, greed works." In the book *The Spirit of Capitalism*, the author argues that greed is what makes some nations better than others. This then is the philosophy of the capitalist driven society we are born into. We are indoctrinated to desire things we don't need and to need things we don't desire. We absorb this philosophy into our daily lives, and we start feeling deprived if we don't have something which others have even though we might have no actual need for it.

The Islamic philosophy and teaching on greed is radically different to this.

Islam does not discourage seeking wealth or permissible pleasures, but indicates that checks, balances and moderation are necessary. We are encouraged to set goals, have a vision, work hard and never give up. Realistically it is the quality of ambition within limits which pushes us to improve and raise the bar. At the same time we are taught to be grateful for each day, be content with our destiny after making the effort, avoid comparing ourselves to others, and to enjoy the little things in life.

01 The Islamic concept at its root is based on *radha bil qadr*, to be content with Divine destiny. "Is it they who allocate the mercy of your Lord? We have allocated among them their livelihood in the worldly life and have raised some of them over others in ranks, so that some of them may put some others to work." (Noble Quran 43:32) Allah ﷻ makes it abundantly clear that He is in charge of giving us money, wealth, income and ultimately all that we desire. How much we earn is not based on skill, talent, effort or intelligence. Society is designed in such a way that everyone has something that someone else needs. The wealthy need people to collect the dirt, clean their homes and give them a haircut, and the dirt collector, maid and barber need the doctors and dentists. The different levels of society are determined by Divine Decree. Each level of society can benefit from the others.

02 Allah ﷻ knows what's best for us in every circumstance even though we

might not understand or fathom it. The Israelites were being mercilessly persecuted by the Pharaoh even when they had accepted the message of Prophet Moosa ﷺ, much like how the Palestinians are undergoing genocide at the hands of the modern-day Pharaohs, the Israelis. Yet this difficult situation

had a greater Divine Wisdom behind it. "We intended to favor those who were held as weak in the land, and to make them leaders and make them inheritors, and give them power in the land." (Noble Quran 28:5-6) The oppressed people were given the lofty ranks of Paradise if they were killed or died, while the survivors were given complete freedom and power. On the other hand the oppressors failed the test and earned places in Hell.

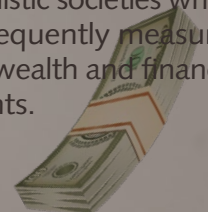
Sometimes a good person is not given a lot of money because his nature is such that having a lot will lead him astray to Hell. For him it is better not to have as the wealth will corrupt him. Once the Prophet ﷺ was giving money to a group of people. Sa'ad ﷺ noticed that he had left out a good man. He requested that the Prophet ﷺ give him money. At the third time, the Prophet ﷺ replied that at times he does not give to a good person out of fear that the wealth would take him to Hell. (Bukhari) He might gain the world but lose the Hereafter. Not giving him money will be better for him.

All spiritual philosophies and faiths condemn and frown on greed. The Greek philosophers depicted greed as a vice that leads to moral and societal decay. Erich Fromm said, "Greed is a bottomless pit which exhausts the person in an endless effort to satisfy the need without ever reaching satisfaction."

ALL SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHIES AND FAITHS CONDEMN AND FROWN ON GREED

Abd al-Rahman III was one of the most powerful men of his time. Emir of Cordoba from 912 to 929, and later the Caliph of Cordoba from 929 to 961, he ruled over the Islamic state in Andalus, which covered most of today's Spain and Portugal. He noted in his diary, "I have now reigned above fifty years in victory and peace. Beloved by my subjects, dreaded by my enemies, and respected by my allies. Riches and honors, power and pleasure, have waited on my call, nor does any earthly blessing appear to have diligently numbered the days of pure and genuine happiness which have fallen on my lot, they amount to fourteen. O man! Do not place your confidence in this present world." An astute observation was made that there is a sufficiency in the world for man's need but not for man's greed.

The modern era on the other hand has glamorized it, particularly in the capitalistic societies where success is frequently measured by material wealth and financial achievements.



GREED

IS STERNLY WARNED AGAINST IN HADITH

01 The Hadith warns us, "Beware of greed, for it was greed that destroyed those before you. It commanded them to be miserly and they did so. It commanded them to break family ties, and they did so. It commanded them to behave wickedly, and they did so." (Abu Dawood)

The warning is clear. Unrestricted desires lead to Hell and to destruction in this world as well. Greed is mentioned as the cause of destruction of past nations. Some were destroyed in their greed for power, others in their greed for wealth, and yet others in their greed for immoral lustful actions. The Hadith explains three ways in which greed corrupts the soul and leads to evil deeds. Greed leads to miserliness and leaving out the noble quality of generosity. The second sin mentioned in this Hadith is breaking family ties. How often are family ties broken over business disputes, wranglings over inheritance, and greed for extra money? The third sin mentioned is immorality. This could refer to people doing immoral deeds to earn money like prostitutes, or people being greedy for immorality like sex addicts and sexual deviants. Greed is the key to the dark world of exploitation for sexual pleasure. In pursuit of lust, the most vulnerable in society are exploited, small kids are abused, and women are trafficked. Currently a 74-year-old French surgeon is on trial for abusing 299 patients, mainly children with an average age of 11, over a 30-year career. He even detailed this abuse

in notebooks.

All three results of greed mentioned in this Hadith are devastating, not just to the soul, but to the family and society as well. Paedophilia and some of the worst abuses of the most vulnerable in society is due to unbridled greed for personal pleasure.

02 "The son of Adam grows old but remains young in two matters: greed for wealth and greed for long life." (Muslim)

This Hadith reminds us that greed never ends. Two things that people desire the most in this world is a long life and a lot of wealth. Neither of these are bad things in themselves. Both wealth and a long life can be blessings if used in ways that are pleasing to Allah ﷻ. This Hadith is not a condemnation of these desires but an observation of human nature. Human beings never give up the desire for wealth and a long life, even if they are old and wealthy.

This Hadith is a

reminder to us that nothing will ever be enough. No life is long enough, and no amount of money is ever enough for those who do not make an effort to keep their greed in check.

03 "If the son of Adam had two valleys full of wealth, he would desire a third. Nothing will fill his belly but the dust of the grave, yet Allah relents to those who repent." (Bukhari)

This Hadith is a firm reminder that greed is insatiable. A greedy soul will consume you and take you down dark places. There is no amount of wealth, possessions, fame, accomplishments, or sexual adventures that can satisfy the greedy soul. Kidnappings are on the rise in South Africa, even of small kids. Nothing is driving that evil except a greed for more money.

Planned obsolescence and greed

There is an interesting story that illustrates how the modern concept of greed has become mainstream, and how the concept of consumerism was engineered. Prior to this, humanity largely built things to last, and people would buy only what they needed. There's a light bulb in a fire station in San Francisco which has been in use since 1901. Made by the Shelby Electric Company, it is nothing extraordinary in itself with a hand-blown carbon filament originally emitting 30 watts. So why could such an old bulb still work while we need to change ours every so often? This is the secret behind consumerism. In 1932 the world's biggest electrical companies who made not only lightbulbs but supplied the world with street lighting, copper wires for phone lines, cabling for ships, trains and tram lines, fridges, ovens and electrics for cars, homes and offices met and formed the Phoebus Cartel. They made a policy decision to put anyone out of business who created a lightbulb that lasted more than six months. They systemised how long each appliance should last. Planned obsolescence or building an item to last for a limited period of time was concocted and the continuous upgrade was created.

Greed for money drove them to disregard the consumer. Humanity caught up with the idea of obsolescence, so they came up with engineered dissatisfaction, where you very quickly do not feel satisfied with what you have. The 1956 Chevrolet Bel Air was the first car and product designed to engineer dissatisfaction. It had a blue sheen on the

dashboard and was meant to be an accessory with your handbag or coat. But they already had a catalogue of what the upgrade would look like in six months' time. Largely similar under the hood but with new details in styling, add-ons, tailfins and colours. They forced the consumer to be unhappy with his new purchase very soon after buying it.

That is the principle which has people queuing for the latest smartphone which is pretty much like the old model with incremental improvements and throwing out expensive models to have the latest on offer. Now you had the rolling upgrade where you yourself felt that you were making an informed decision to upgrade and that your current item was inadequate. Reliability and long-term performance became irrelevant. What mattered was cosmetic change.

Where does this constant need for upgrade end? Greed to be the perfect biological human is what makes people in Beijing pay up to R600 for a canister of pure mountain oxygen pumped from the Canadian Rocky Mountains. A canister of what they call "the cleanest air on earth" will last you around 17 minutes! Another company sells air sourced from different regions for R23,000 for a 580ml jar which will last you about a minute! Greed for betterment blinds us to how ridiculous some things actually are, and how incredulous we can become.

Greed drives conflict

Western scholars have advanced the theory that greed is the major cause of armed conflict and war, bringing in its wake exploitation

of people. From the sweatshops of Asia where brand name clothing is manufactured under slave conditions to the wars on Afghanistan for control of their mineral resources, greed for gain through control of goods and resources powers wars and exploitation.

DR Congo is a country continually in the grip of war and instability due to the wealth of its mineral resources. The second largest country in Africa and the 11th largest in the world, it was run as King Leopold II of Belgium's personal possession from 1885-1908. He extracted a fortune from the territory using forced labour to build his wealth. He used systematic brutality and atrocities including forced labour, torture, murder, kidnapping and the amputation of hands and feet of men, women and children when the quota for rubber was not met. That instability continues today with Tantalum being just one example of the rare minerals found there. It is used in smartphones and weighs less than half a garden pea, yet it is essential for smartphones and almost all other sophisticated electronic devices to function. It can hold a high charge while operating in a range of temperatures making it ideal material for tiny capacitors which temporarily store energy. 40% of this mineral comes from the DR Congo.



Abdur Rahman ibn Auf ؓ once made this Dua for an entire Tawaaf, "Oh Allah, protect me from the greed of my soul." When he was asked why he made this Dua, he replied, "When I safeguard myself from the greed of my soul, I safeguard myself from miserliness, greed and breaking of family ties." Unbridled greed results in frustration because when a person is not content with what he has been given, he has continuous desires, and it is impossible for us to gain and fulfil all our desires. This leads to perpetual worry, anxiety and unease.

The hadith informs us that the richest person is the one who is most content, "Be satisfied with what Allah has set out for you and you shall be the richest of the people." (Tirmidhi) Another hadith points out, "He is successful who has accepted Islam, who has been provided with sufficient for his want and been made contented by Allah with what He has given him." (Muslim)

Benefits and blessings of being content with the Divine Decree:

01 One who has this quality has less stress and anxiety in life because these stem from fear of the unknown. When we are connected with our Creator who controls tomorrow, the anxiety lessens.

02 "When Allah loves a people He subjects them to trials. So whoever is content, then for him is the pleasure (of Allah ﷻ)." (Tirmidhi) Whoever is content with Allah ﷻ's decisions will gain His Pleasure. Being content means

you can still try for better. It doesn't necessarily equate with happiness. The people of Gaza are still content with the Decree of Allah ﷻ after a year of horror although they still feel the pain and anguish. The Sahaba ؓ had this quality of being pleased with Allah ﷻ's decisions and thus earned the accolade of His Pleasure, "Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him." (Noble Quran 9:100)

We are not all built exactly the same. Our strength and range of desires differ and Islam takes cognisance of this and caters to all of mankind. There is leeway in Islam and we all need to decide how much we need or want within the spectrum of permissibility. Some might be more immersed in business than others but still fulfilling their religious obligations. Others might be more immersed in worship. The main priority is to get to Paradise.

The Sunnah teaches us that the Prophet ﷺ occasionally enjoyed the pleasures of the world such as fine clothes and good food, but he did not go out of his way to attain them. Not everyone is on the same level. As long as you do not engage in Haraam and are carrying out the Fardh acts then there is no problem in enjoying Halaal pleasure.

Wealth is a tool which more often than not corrupts but not always. Enjoy it while fulfilling your obligations to Allah ﷻ and humanity and raise your bar of piety. We can't realistically live without desires if we are human and not everything, we yearn for

is evil in itself. Capitalism says that all desire is good while some ideologies shun the world and call all of it evil. Islam takes the middle ground with the world not being the most important priority. There is wisdom beyond our intellect in what we get or not. We can want better for tomorrow, but we need to be content with what we have today and accept the status quo after having made the effort.

We are taught a Dua in the Noble Quran, "Oh Allah, grants us goodness in this world and goodness in the next world." Yearning itself is thus not greed because we are being taught to ask of the good things of this world. The Hadith tells us, "Good, lawful wealth is excellent for a pious man." (Al Adab Al Mufrad)

Being content does not mean that we sit down at home and do nothing to earn a living. We need to make the effort and strive but after all that we accept the final, Divine outcome. We don't prioritize what we yearn for over what we actually gain. Our desires do not interfere with what is more important: our relationship with Allah ﷻ, our faith, Salaah, etc.

"Men whom no trade or sale make neglectful of the remembrance of Allah, nor from establishing Salaah and paying Zakaat." (Noble Quran 24:37) This verse indicates that wealth should not prevent people from the remembrance of Allah ﷻ. These people are described as people of trade and business, people who strive to earn, yet the wealth is not the overriding priority of their lives as in the Western capitalist system.

HOW DO WE KEEP GREED IN CHECK

01 Reduce expenditure so that there is less concern to earn more. Budgeting is described as a quality of the special servants of Allah ﷺ. Have mindful spending and learn to control impulse buying.

02 Do not overly concern yourself with the future and what is yet to happen or come your way.

03 Cultivate gratitude by appreciating what you have currently and looking at those who are less fortunate.

04 Ramadaan teaches us how to control our desires from turning to greed. We stay away from Halaal food, drink and sexual pleasures. It provides a method of training that shows us how to keep desires in check. We follow a timetable

and have order in our day for Sehri, Salaah, Taraweeh, Iftar and recitation of the Noble Quran. It helps us curb impulse eating and buying. If this spirit of Ramadaan can become a reality after Ramadaan, then the Muslim community will

05 Re-evaluate what success means. Embrace a minimalist, simple lifestyle and set meaningful goals, not limitless aspirations. Success should not be judged on wealth but a holistic, fulfilling lifestyle.

CONTROLLING DESIRES, LOOKING WITH EMPATHY AT THE LESS FORTUNATE AND BEING CONTENT WITH OUR LOT ARE KEY INGREDIENTS IN BUILDING SELF-CONTROL AND CURBING GREED.

be a society of respect and honour where the less privileged are taken care of.

Controlling desires, looking with empathy at the less fortunate and being content with our lot are key ingredients in building self-control and curbing greed.

Greed leads us to exploit others are key ingredients in building self-control and curbing greed. and makes for an evil world, while contentment and looking out for others brings true happiness and joy.

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"Do not treat people except in the way you would love to be treated by them." (Tabrani)
"Love for people what you love for yourself." (Musnad Ahmad)

11 LESSONS FROM SURAH QASAS

SURAH QASAS, THE 28TH SURAH OF THE NOBLE QURAN, WAS REVEALED ON THE ROUTE FROM MAKKAH MUKARRAMAH TO MADINAH MUNWWARAH DURING THE HIJRAH. THE SURAH DEALS WITH PROPHET MOOSA ﷺ'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE PHARAOH, AND TOWARDS THE END THE EPISODE WITH QAROON IS RECOUNTED.

Here are selected lessons from the Surah:

LESSON 1: THE TEST OF POWER AND AUTHORITY IS TO USE IT FOR THE GOOD OF PEOPLE AND NOT ABUSE IT

Pharaoh became high-handed in the land and divided its people into different groups, persecuting a group of them. (Verse 4)

Power went to the head of Pharaoh and led to him discriminating against the Israelites. His political position made him feel untouchable and above the law. People in positions of authority and control need to use that power correctly.

LESSON 2: TOUGH TIMES ARE MEANT TO BUILD US, NOT BREAK US. THEY HERALD GOODNESS IN THIS WORLD AND HIGH STAGES IN PARADISE IF APPROACHED CORRECTLY

And We intended to favour those who were held as weak in the land, make them leaders, inheritors (of the land) and give them power in the land. (Verse 5-6)

The Israelites had to undergo immense suffering at the hands of Pharaoh and the Copts. In the Divine scheme of things, it had a purpose: to ultimately grant them true freedom and security.

Trust in the Plan of Allah ﷻ, tailor-made for each person.

LESSON 3: THE POTENTIAL FOR ANYTHING TO HARM OR HELP IS IN THE CONTROL OF ALLAH ﷻ

When you fear for him, cast him into the river. (Verse 7)

The River Nile could have been the means of drowning the baby Moosa ﷺ or taking him forever away from his mother. Yet Allah ﷻ made the same river deliver him safely to the door of Pharaoh's palace. As a result, he enjoyed a safe upbringing, united with his mother.

Harm or benefit in any item is in the control of Allah ﷻ

LESSON 4: OUR APPROACH DETERMINES THE OUTCOME

The family of Pharaoh picked him

up so that he becomes an enemy for them and a cause of grief. (Verse 8)

The approach of Pharaoh's wife in wanting to adopt baby Moosa ﷺ saw this becoming a means of blessing for her. On the other hand, he became a means of Pharaoh's destruction.

The way we carry out actions will determine if it will be a means of benefit or harm.

LESSON 5: HAVING A CONNECTION WITH ALLAH ﷻ GIVES ONE RESOLVE IN TESTING TIMES

The heart of the mother of Moosa became restless. She was about to disclose this had we not strengthened her heart. (Verse 10)

When Moosa ﷺ's mother became restless with the anxiety of losing him, she was given Divine strength of heart to deal with the crisis and not break down.

If we have a relationship with Allah ﷻ by doing what pleases Him, we will navigate the turbulent times of life without being totally overwhelmed.

LESSON 6: WE MIGHT NOT LIKE A SITUATION IN LIFE, YET IT MIGHT BE BETTER FOR US.

Thus We brought him back to his mother, so that her eye may take comfort. (Verse 13)

The loss of the baby Moosa ﷺ was a terrifying episode for his mother. Yet within a day or so it was the means of him getting safety from being killed, finding a place within the palace, and being returned to his mother who was actually paid to take care of him.

Difficult times in life might be the stepping stone to greater success and fortune though it may not seem like that on the surface.

LESSON 7: AUDIT OUR PERSONAL ACTIONS MORE STRINGENTLY THAN THOSE OF OTHERS.

Oh my Lord, I have wronged myself, so forgive me! (Verse 16)

Moosa ﷺ killed the Coptic in trying to save the Israelite. Although the killing was accidental and permissible, yet the Prophets would take extra care in special cases in doing permissible acts and would avoid them unless they received Divine instruction.

Taking a hard look at our personal behaviour and practices, and being critical, is a key to personal reform and progress.

LESSON 8: ACTION COUPLED WITH SUPPLICATION IS THE RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

He went out of the city in a state of fear, waiting for what comes

next. He said, "Oh my Lord, save me from the cruel people." (Verse 21)

Moosa ﷺ was targeted for execution by Pharaoh's security forces. He did what was needed by leaving Pharaoh's realm. He added a Dua to Allah ﷻ to his actions asking for help. Moosa ﷺ turns to Allah ﷻ at every critical juncture in his life.

When we do what needs to be done in terms of our worldly needs, we should not only rely on our actions but rather ask Allah ﷻ for success.

LESSON 9: HELPING THE WEAK AND OPPRESSED.

So he drew water (for their animals for their sake). (Verse 24)

On arriving in Madyan, Moosa ﷺ found two ladies waiting to give water to their animals after the other shepherds had left. It is a quality of the Prophets to help the weak. As he had done for the Israelite under attack by the Coptic, Moosa ﷺ did not let his personal needs stop him from helping the women.

Looking out for the weak and helpless is a quality that will earn us the Duas of those we help, taking us far in life.

LESSON 10: QUALITIES IN A WORKER.

Dear father, hire him. The best man you can hire is the one who is strong and trustworthy. (Verse 26)

One of the ladies recommended that their father hire Moosa ﷺ as

he had the qualities of strength and trustworthiness. In hiring people, their suitability for the job should not only include the qualifications needed but also their integrity and trustworthiness. By the same token, the worker needs to bring these skills and qualities to his job.

LESSON 11: SPOT SKILLS AND NURTURE THEM.

My brother Haroon is more fluent in speech than I am, so send him with me as a helper. (Verse 34)

When Moosa ﷺ was appointed as a Prophet, he accepted the task. He did an assessment on how best to carry it out and accepted his limitations in terms of having a speech impediment. He looked at how to overcome that limitation by asking for his brother to be made a Prophet as well. It displayed his eye for skills and how to utilise them in teamwork to realise his goals.

We need to nurture young talent in our communities and nurture and mentor it. This will benefit the community as a whole in the long term. There is no limit to what we can achieve as a society as long as we don't mind who takes credit for it.

HADITH

VERIFICATION SERIES 17

In this series we bring you a selection of topics from hadithanswers.com



DO NOT FEAR

BANKRUPTCY! Question:

Kindly provide the reference for this statement: Imam Shafi'i rahimahullah said: "None of you should be afraid of bankruptcy. I became bankrupt three times and then became wealthy."

Answer: Imam Bayhaqi rahimahullah has recorded this statement of Imam Shafi'i rahimahullah.

Imam Shafi'i rahimahullah said: "Do not be disheartened by poverty. I faced bankruptcy three times, yet each time, I regained prosperity."

(Manaqibush Shafi'i, vol. 2, pg. 169)

And Allah azh-hu Knows best.

FOUR DEEDS WHICH DRAW SUSTENANCE

Question: What is the reference for this statement?

"Four things draw and attract sustenance; Tahajjud, abundant istighfar in the early parts of the morning, habitually giving charity and remembering Allah in the beginning and end of the day."

Answer: Imam Ibn Qayyim rahimahullah has mentioned this in Zadul Ma'ad.

(Zadul Ma'ad, vol. 4, pg. 378)

And Allah azh-hu Knows best.

HALAL INCOME WILL UNLOCK THE TREASURES OF ALLAH TA'ALA

Question: What is the reference for this statement of Yahya ibn Mu'adh? Yahya ibn Mu'adh ar Razi rahimahullah said, "Obedience is stored up in the stores of Allah; its key is du'a and its means (efforts) is permissible earnings."

Answer: This has been cited -without a chain- in Tambihul Ghafilin and Mirqatul Mafatih.

Yahya ibn Mu'adh Ar Razi rahimahullah [Demise: 258 A.H.] said: "Obedience is stored in the treasures of Allah azh-hu, its key is du'a and its teeth [on the key] are halal morsels/ income."

(Tambihul Ghafilin, pg. 431 and Mirqatul Mafatih, under Hadith: 2498)

And Allah azh-hu Knows best.



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